

VIOLENCE AND SUICIDE

Fact Sheet



The Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of a nationwide surveying effort led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor students' health risks and behaviors in six categories identified as most likely to result in adverse outcomes. These categories include unintentional injury and violence, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy or disease, dietary behaviors, and physical inactivity. High response rates allow results of the 2003 Michigan YRBS to be generalized to all Michigan students in grades 9-12.

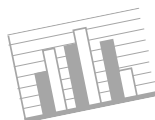


Of Vital Concern: The National Perspective

Approximately nine out of ten homicide victims in the United States are killed with a weapon of some type, such as a gun, knife, or club. Homicide is the second leading cause of death among all youth aged 15 to 19 (10.6 per 100,000) and is the leading cause of death among black youth aged 15 to 19 (37.2 per 100,000). Homicide rates increase substantially from 1.3 per 100,000 in youth aged 10-14 years to 10.6 per 100,000 in youth aged 15 to 19 years. Firearms markedly elevate the severity of the health consequences of violent behavior. In 1998, 82% of homicide victims 15 to 19 years old were killed with firearms. In 2001, 6% of high school students reported carrying a gun. Nearly 100% of school districts have a policy prohibiting weapon possession or use by high school students. A significant decrease in weapon carrying (e.g. a gun, knife, or club) among high school students on school property from 1993 to 2001 occurred. In 2001, 7% of high school students felt unsafe at school or traveling to or from school. In 1999, about 1.6 million thefts of student property occurred at school.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among youth aged 15 to 19. The suicide rate for persons aged 15 to 19 was 8.2 per 100,000 in 1999, down from a high of 11.0 per 100,000 in 1994. In 2001, 15% of high school students had made a specific plan to attempt suicide and 9% had attempted suicide one or more times in the past year. From 1991 to 2001, the percentage of high school students who seriously considered suicide decreased from 29% to 19%.

For complete references, please log onto www.emc.cmich.edu/yrbs.

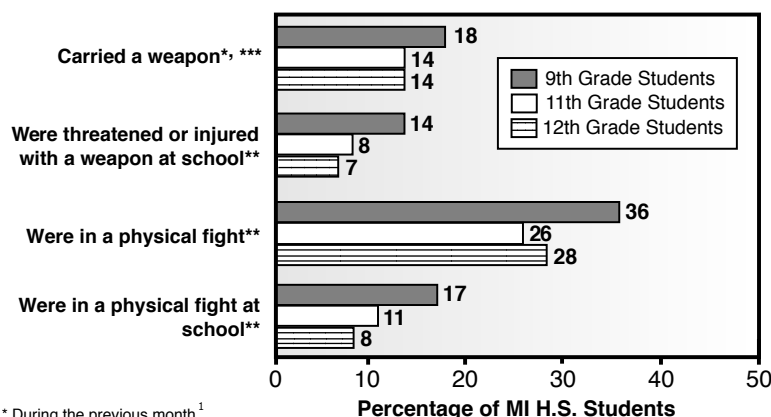


2003 Survey Results

- ◆ The majority of students had not **carried a gun** or **carried a weapon** of any kind **on school property**.
- ◆ The majority of students had not experienced violence, such as **fights resulting in injury** and **threats with weapons**, and had **not missed school due to feeling unsafe**.
- ◆ Males were more likely to experience most forms of violence than females, and younger students were more likely to be involved in incidents involving **weapons** and **fights, on and off school property**, than were older students (Figure 1).

1

Fights and Weapons by Grade



* During the previous month¹

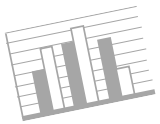
** During the previous year

*** These percentages do not represent a statistically significant difference among grades.

¹ Previous month means the 30 days preceding the survey.

VIOLENCE AND SUICIDE

Fact Sheet

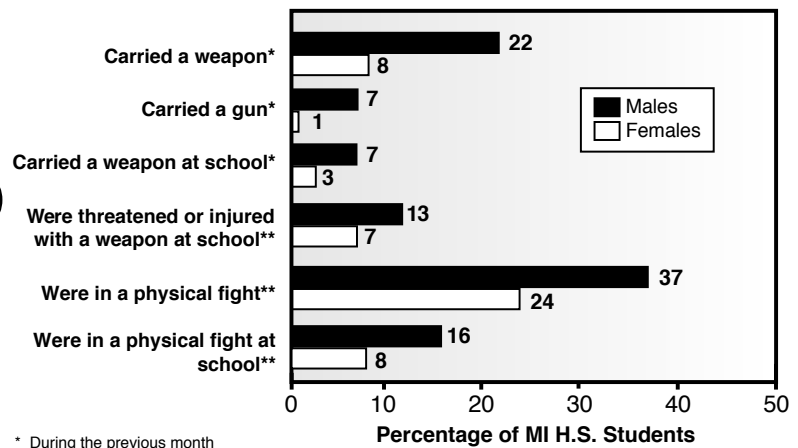


2003 Survey Results (continued)

- ◆ Males were three times more likely than females to **carry a weapon**, two times more likely to **carry a weapon on school property**, and seven times more likely to **carry a gun** (Figure 2).
- ◆ Students who belong to a racial/ethnic minority were twice as likely as white students to have been in a **physical fight on school property** and to have **skipped school recently² because they did not feel safe** (Figure 3).
- ◆ Hispanic students were nearly twice as likely as white students to have **carried a weapon** recently, and three times as likely as white students to have **carried a weapon to school** and have **carried a gun** (Figure 3).
- ◆ **At school**, freshman students were more likely than eleventh or twelfth graders to have been in a **physical fight**, nearly twice as likely as tenth, eleventh, or twelfth graders to have been **threatened or injured with a weapon**, and twice as likely as tenth graders to have **skipped recently because they did not feel safe**.
- ◆ **At school**, males were more likely than females to have had **personal property stolen or damaged**, been in a **physical fight**, and been **threatened with a weapon** (Figure 2).

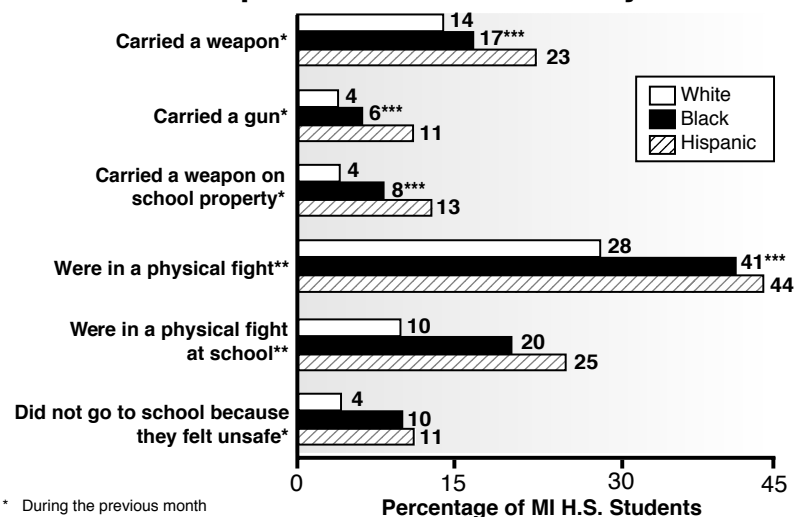
2

Fights and Weapons by Gender



3

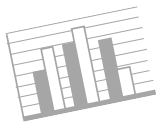
Weapons and School Safety



² Recently means during past 30 days.

VIOLENCE AND SUICIDE

Fact Sheet



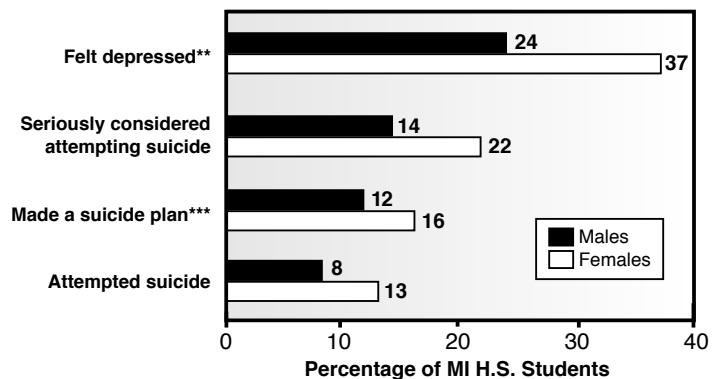
2003 Survey Results (continued)

- ◆ Males were more likely than females, ninth graders more likely than eleventh graders, and Hispanic students more likely than white students to have been in a **physical fight** in the previous year.
- ◆ One in nine students, regardless of gender, had been **physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend**. However, more black students than white students had been hurt by a **boyfriend or girlfriend** in the previous year.
- ◆ One in three students reported **feeling depressed**² for more than two weeks in a row and one in six seriously **considered suicide** during the past year.
- ◆ More females than males reported feeling **depressed**, **considering suicide**, and **attempting suicide** (Figure 4).
- ◆ Ninth graders were more likely than tenth and twelfth graders to **attempt suicide** and twice as likely as tenth graders to have been **treated by a medical professional** for a suicide injury (Figure 5).

² *Feeling depressed* means feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.

4

Depression and Suicide*



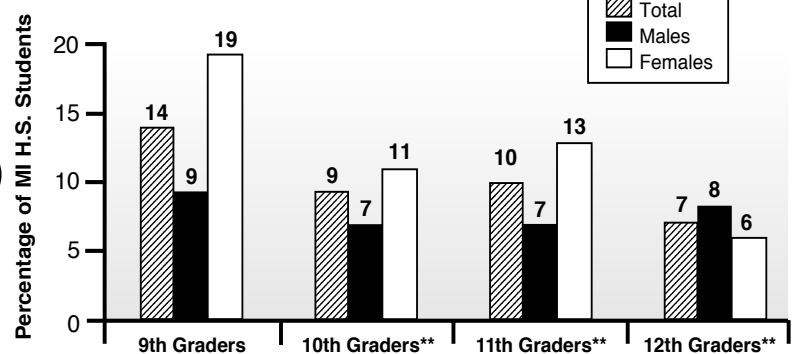
* During the previous year

** Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities

*** These percentages do not reflect a statistically significant difference between genders.

5

Suicide Attempts*



* During the previous year

** These percentages do not reflect a statistically significant difference between genders.

Trends



Compared to 1997, high school students were significantly less likely to **carry a weapon on school property** and to have been in a **physical fight** in the past year. They were also less likely to **consider suicide** and **make a suicide plan**.

Contact Information

Michigan Department of Education, Grants Coordination and School Support,
Coordinated School Health and Safety Programs
P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, Michigan 48909

Phone: 517-241-4284

Web: www.michigan.gov/mde

State of Compliance With Federal Law

The Michigan Department of Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination, and with all requirements and regulations of the U. S. Department of Education. 10,000 pieces printed at \$.08 each, total cost \$791.77.

Michigan State Board of Education

Kathleen N. Straus, President
Carolyn L. Curtin, Secretary
Marianne Yared McGuire, NASBE Delegate
Reginald M. Turner

Herbert S. Moyer, Vice President
John C. Austin, Treasurer
Elizabeth W. Bauer
Eileen Lappin Weiser

Ex-Officio

Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Thomas D. Watkins, Jr., Superintendent of Public Instruction

VIOLENCE AND SUICIDE

Fact Sheet



SURVEY QUESTION

SURVEY QUESTION	MI	US	GENDER		GRADE				RACE/ETHNICITY		
	03	03	M	F	9	10	11	12	White	Black	Hispanic
% of students who carried a weapon , such as a gun, knife, or club, on one or more of the past 30 days	15	17	22	8	18	14	14	14	14	17	23
% of students who carried a gun on one or more of the past 30 days	4	6	7	1	5	4	4	5	4	6	11
% of students who carried a weapon , such as a gun, knife, or club, on school property on one or more of the past 30 days	5	6	7	3	6	5	5	4	4	8	13
% of students who did not go to school on one or more of the past 30 days because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school	6	5	6	5	8	4	4	4	4	10	11
% of students who had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property one or more times during the past 12 months	10	9	13	7	14	8	8	7	9	11	16
% of students who had property , such as car, clothing, or books, stolen or deliberately damaged on school property during past 12 months	32	30	35	28	34	32	29	29	31	31	37
% of students who were in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months	31	33	37	24	36	31	26	28	28	41	44
% of students who were injured in a physical fight and had to be treated by a doctor or nurse one or more times during the past 12 months	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	7
% of students who were in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the past 12 months	12	13	16	8	17	11	11	8	10	20	25
% of students who were ever hit, slapped or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the past 12 months	11	9	13	10	10	9	14	12	10	16	18
% of students who ever felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months	30	29	24	37	33	30	27	30	30	31	37
% of students who seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months	18	17	14	22	20	17	18	15	18	15	24
% of students who made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months	14	17	12	16	16	14	13	12	14	12	21
% of students who actually attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months	11	9	8	13	14	9	10	7	10	9	18
% of students whose attempted suicide during the past 12 months resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse	3	3	2	4	4	2	3	3	3	3	7

For additional information on the YRBS results, please log on to www.emc.cmich.edu/yrbs